

Program Improvement Award

Award Summary

Funding Category	Summary	Funding Approximates per Award
Program Improvement Award	Purpose of these awards are to support short-term projects that involve program improvement to advance access to health information resources.	Funding Range: \$5,000-\$7,000 Awards Available (approximate): 4 Total Funds: \$15,000 Note: the funding range amounts for this award category are approximates. Applicants are not required to budget to the max amount if the project does not require it.
Period of Performance: September 2, 2021 – April 15, 2022		

The Spencer S. Eccles Health Sciences Library (EHSL) at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, Utah is the designated Regional Medical Library (RML) for Region 4 of the Network of the National Library of Medicine (NNLM) serving the states of Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.

The mission of the NNLM is to provide U.S. researchers, health professionals, public health workforce, educators, and the public with equal access to biomedical and health information resources and data.

NNLM Region 4 offers funding for projects that improve access to health information, increase engagement with research and data, expand professional knowledge, and support outreach that promotes awareness and use of NLM resources in local communities.

Through partnerships with regional members and other organizations with aligning missions, the NNLM Region 4 works towards ensuring continuity for essential programs of the NNLM, and cooperatively design, implement, and evaluate innovative approaches to serving the biomedical and health information needs of researchers, health professionals, public health workforce, educators, and the public in communities across the U.S., including persons who experience health disparities and populations underrepresented in biomedical research.

The NNLM Region 4 commits to prioritizing support for underrepresented populations through meaningful engagement, which requires the support from all of our regional members and partners. Underrepresented populations are determined to be those experiencing health disparities as a result of their: race and ethnicity; biological sex, gender identity or expression, and sexual orientation; cognitive and physical abilities; religious background or identification; socio-economic status (past and current); education level, health literacy, and linguistic needs; geographic location including underrepresented populations from medically underserved areas; or other factors or demographics that create unequal access to the highest level of health (please refer to the [January 2019 Special Supplement by the American Journal of Public Health](#) about health disparities research for more information).

Purpose

The Network of the National Library of Medicine Region 4 (NNLM Region 4), under a cooperative agreement grant with the U.S. National Library of Medicine (NLM), announces the availability of the **Program Improvement Award**. The purpose of this funding is to support short-term projects that involves program improvement to advance access to health information resources.

Specifically, the Program Improvement Award seeks to address the following aims:

Administrative Core Aim 2: Construct a rich culture built on a foundation of inclusive programming designed to attract and engage a diverse regional network through effective membership management.

Program Core Aim 1: Use community-driven approaches to increase access to health information.

Program Core Aim 2: Work through libraries and other members to support a highly trained workforce in biomedical, health information, and data science resources.

We are offering five types of program improvement awards. Approximately seven individual awards will be made. Funding ranges from up to \$5,000 or \$7,000 depending on the award. The funding range amounts for this award category are approximates. Applicants are not required to budget to the max amount if the project does not require it. Also, applicants with projects requiring funds exceeding the approximate amounts may combine up to two awards. All applicants are strongly encouraged to discuss their ideas with John Bramble, NNLM Region 4 Executive Director, the award administrator, or their state point of contact.

The purpose of these awards in the following categories are as follows:

1. Community-Based Health Organizations Program Improvement Award will seek to understand the health information needs of community-based health organization workforce. This includes the health information needs for clients and for staff. This project would involve conducting a user-centered information needs assessment of key stakeholders to identify barriers and seek ways to improve access to health information. Up to \$5,000 of funding is available for one award.
2. Library Program Improvement Award will seek to understand the health information needs of libraries serving the public. This project would involve conducting a user-centered information needs assessment of key stakeholders to identify barriers and seek ways to improve access to health information. Up to \$5,000 of funding is available for one award.
3. Public Health Program Improvement Award will seek to understand the health information needs of the public health workforce for clients and staff. This project would involve conducting a user-centered information needs assessment of key stakeholders to identify barriers and seek ways to improve access to health information. Up to \$5,000 of funding is available for one award.
4. Innovation in Health Information Award will encourage innovation in health information access, use, and evaluation. Projects should incorporate an interdisciplinary/transdisciplinary approach to improve usage of health information for NNLM priority populations. Up to \$7,000 of funding is available for each of two awards.
5. Technology Improvement Program Award will address the digital divide by improving community access to the internet and providing education on health literacy skills required to find and interpret biomedical or health information. These awards are intended for use by our member institutions to enhance community access to online resources by acquiring new or upgraded hardware or software. Examples include but are not limited to upgrading computer equipment used in health information training, or supporting access to webinar software to attend online learning or attend online meetings. Up to \$5,000 of funding is available for each of two awards.

Requirements and Preferences

- All projects must incorporate one or more National Library of Medicine resources like [PubMed](#), [ClinicalTrials.gov](#), or [MedlinePlus](#). You can refer to the [NLM list of Databases, Resources, and APIs](#) for a complete overview of resources by topic.
- Accessible virtual programs and projects are encouraged. Allowable related costs may include: social media campaigns, digital library collections (ebooks/audio), speaker fees, closed captioning, American Sign Language (ASL) interpretation, and digital platform subscriptions.
- For any kits or other project-related supplies, cleaning and sanitizing protocols should be included that comply with the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities recommendations](#). In compliance with the [EPA Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#), frequent cleaning and disinfection is necessary to reduce exposure. Dirty surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water prior to disinfection. Routinely disinfect frequently touched surfaces at least daily. NNLM recommends using an approved disinfectant wipe after each use.

- Priority will be given to projects that reach a Medically Underserved Area (MUA)* or an Underrepresented in Biomedical Research (UBR) population including but not limited to:
 - Racial and ethnic minority populations
 - Sexual and gender minority populations
 - Populations reported below the Federal Poverty Level
 - Populations with limited access to medical care
 - Populations with physical and/or mental disabilities
 - Soldiers, Veterans and Military Families
 - Rural Populations

* Consider using the interactive online [Underserved Health Communities Guide](#) to identify a community or population with data from the U.S. Census Bureau, the Federal Communications Commission, the Health Resources and Services Administration, and other secondary sources.

Potential Project Ideas

Potential projects may include funding for programs or community health toolkits that include but are not limited to (this list is not meant to be all-inclusive):

- [Internet hotspots](#) used to provide library patrons with the knowledge to find health information resources, including ones offered by the National Library of Medicine, to manage their wellness and that of their families.
- [Programs](#) at the library to promote learning opportunities for the community on various topics, such as gardening, mental health, healthy living, exercise, etc.
- Conduct a [workshop](#) with librarians, health educators, public health officials, community health workers, and/or other professionals to create a plan to improve access to health information, especially for underserved communities, in the state.
- Use [statistical software](#) to allow library staff and Board members to have a better understanding of the community needs and allow for more informed decision making regarding library programming and resources.

Additional Information:

- Projects containing [Human Subjects Research](#) components will *not* be reviewed or considered for funding. Applicants that can generate a determination letter from their IRB stating that their project does not meet regulatory definitions (i.e., quality improvement activities that are not human subjects research) should submit documentation as soon as possible.
- For more project ideas, see [NNLM Recent Funded Projects](#).
- You also can find examples of [Exemplary RFP Application Sections](#), which may inform your planning and writing process.
- If you would like to discuss your project before submitting a proposal, please contact John Bramble, (john.bramble@utah.edu).

Funding

Period of Performance: September 2, 2021 – April 15, 2022

Amount: Up to \$5,000-\$7,000

Number of Awards Available: 4 (approximate)

Application Deadline: August 2, 2021

NNLM Region 4 staff are available for consultation and training on applicable National Library of Medicine resources and potential projects. **Please [contact us](#); we want to help you succeed!** We are here if you want to discuss your ideas and to determine the scope of work. Contacting NNLM does not commit you to completing an application.

Eligibility

[Network member organizations](#) in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming are eligible to apply. Membership is free, and open to any organization that provides or promotes health information. If your institution is not a NNLM Member, [apply](#) for Membership **at least 2 weeks prior to the funding deadline**. Membership is not automatic. A Member record is required to successfully apply.

Application Instructions

System Requirements

It is recommended that you use the following outline to draft your proposal, then submit online.

NOTE: Until the online submission utility is available, we are accepting word document submissions!

Before attempting to submit your application for funding in the NNLM online application system:

1. Confirm that your institution is a [NNLM Member](#) with a NNLM Member record.
 - a. Not sure if your institution is a Member or has a Member record? Search the [NNLM Membership Directory](#) or contact your [Regional Medical Library](#)
 - b. If your institution is not a NNLM Member, [submit an application for membership](#) **at least 3 weeks prior to the funding deadline**. Membership is not automatic. A Member record is required to successfully apply.
2. Confirm that you (the applicant) have an [NNLM Account](#).
 - a. You must be logged in to your NNLM account to successfully apply.
 - b. If you are applying on behalf of the Project Lead, the Project Lead must also have an NNLM account prior to submission.
3. Confirm that your NNLM account is connected to the NNLM Member record for your institution.
 - a. To connect, fill in the "Organization" field on your NNLM account using the autocomplete function. When correctly filled, you will see a 5-digit NNLM ID in parenthesis beside the institution name. Watch a [brief tutorial](#) for assistance with completing this process.
 - b. If you are applying on behalf of the Project Lead, the Project Lead must also be connected to the NNLM Member record for your institution prior to submission.

NOTE: You cannot successfully apply without these components. If you have questions about these or any other system requirements, please contact your [Regional Medical Library](#) or Office in advance of the application deadline.

Online Application Overview

- **Lead Organization:** Select the institution that will lead and receive funding to conduct the proposed project. If the drop-down list appears blank, confirm that your NNLM account is connected to the NNLM Member record for your institution. (See *System Requirements* above)
- **Project Lead:** If you are the Project Lead, select your own name from the drop-down list. If you are submitting this application on behalf of the Project Lead, select their name from the drop-down list. If the name of the Project Lead does not appear in the drop-down list, confirm that their NNLM account is connected to the NNLM Member record for the institution. (See *System Requirements* above)
- **Institution Tax ID:** Enter the 9-digit tax identification number for your institution.
- **Institution DUNS Number:** Please confirm your organization's [DUNS number](#). If you do not have a DUNS number, [apply for one](#) as soon as possible.
- **Have you/your institution previously received NNLM funding in the current grant cycle?** Select Yes, No, or I don't know.
- **Amount Requested:** The amount specified should not exceed the limit established by the RML. Contact the RML if you have questions about the funding amount. This field will accept numbers only. Enter the amount to the nearest whole dollar.

Project Proposal

NOTE: Until the online submission utility is available, we are accepting word document submissions!

- **Project Title:** Describe the project with an external audience in mind. Funded projects are displayed on the [NNLM website](#) and are provided by NLM in response to data calls from NIH, HHS, OMB, Congress, and the White House.
- **Project Summary:** Provide a one-paragraph description that summarizes the proposed project. Funded projects are displayed on the NNLM website and are provided by NLM in response to requests from NIH, HHS, OMB, Congress, and the White House.
- **Partner Organizations:** Use the autocomplete function to find and select existing records for up to three (3) organizations that will partner with the Lead Organization to conduct/complete the project. If a record does not exist for a partner organization, click “Partner Organization not Listed?” and use the additional fields under “Add Partner Organization” to provide the institution name and address.
- **Training be Provided as Part of this Award:** Select yes or no.
- **Proposed Start and End Dates for the Project:** Select the appropriate dates. Contact the RML before applying if your project will extend more than one year.
- **Evidence of Need:** Provide a statement of how the project proposed will support the mission of NNLM, explain the need for the project, and describe the audience or population that will be reached through this project. Please clearly document if this project will engage traditionally underrepresented populations and/or involve medically underserved areas. When possible, support the stated need using data such as known needs assessments or statistics.
- **Project goals and objectives:** State the goal(s) and specific objectives(s) of the proposed project. Goals should align to the [NNLM Goals and Objectives](#). Please review the [National Evaluation Center \(NEC\)](#) resources for information on how to create evaluation plans and objectives.
- **Implementation:** Describe what will be done to meet project objectives and its rationale. Include tasks to be performed and who will perform them.
- **Schedule/Timeline:** In order to meet your objectives, include a detailed timeline that outlines when tasks will be completed, how long it is anticipated to take, and who will do the work.
- **Evaluation Plan:** Incorporating an evaluation into project design and implementation is essential for understanding how well the project achieves its goals. The [Evaluation Planning and Pathway](#) resources provide guidance and tools to effectively design and carry out an evaluation of your project. The evaluation design is broken down in to 5 steps. While you are developing your evaluation plan, including, data collection frequency, type of data to be collected, survey instruments, and how data will be used or disseminated, it is important to consider the context of your program. The context can change your evaluation is designed and implemented, because different settings and populations have different needs and abilities to participate in evaluations. Considering this, the 5 steps are applied across 4 common populations: K-12 Health; Rural Health; Race & Ethnicity; and LGBTQIA+ Health.
- **Diversity, Equity and inclusion:** Explain how this project prioritizes support for underrepresented populations through meaningful engagement that will build or enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in the applicant’s community. **Projects with effective efforts that address diversity, equity, and inclusions issues are essential to a successful application.**
- **Publicity/Promotion:** Briefly describe how you intend to promote your project to the target population. Please specify which NLM resources or NNLM national initiatives will be utilized, how they will be promoted, and how they will be utilized throughout the project.
- **Continuity/Sustainability Plan:** Describe the activities that will sustain project services and/or communication to the targeted community beyond the cooperative agreement period.
- **Personnel Qualifications:** If applicable, list the project personnel who will be involved in the project and include their role(s) and applicable experience. Submit resumes or CVs for personnel listed as attachments with your completed application.

Budget

Awards are cost-reimbursable and are issued to the institution, not the individual. The budget needs to be filled out in the online application system. Additionally, proposals must include a budget spreadsheet and budget narrative justification, explaining the purpose of each item in the project. This can be uploaded in the attachments section of the online application. Budget fields will accept numbers only. Enter each amount to the nearest whole dollar. If a budget line is not applicable for your project, you may leave it blank. The budget estimate should be categorized by the following, as they apply:

- **Personnel:** Include (hourly rate X estimated hours) or (% time X annual salary) in the budget justification attachments or descriptions. Check with the RML for specifics on personnel.
- **Consultant Costs:** Estimated expenses from consultants, such as marketing firms or other agencies; Prior to hiring Consultants, submit the following information to the RML: name of consultant, description of work, hourly rate, total amount/not to exceed amount, and period of performance.
- **Equipment:** Quotes for items required such as computers and other equipment. Include quotes received or other pricing information in the budget attachment or as another attachment.
- **Supplies:** Quotes for printing, publication costs and other materials. Include description and any quotes in the attached budget or as other attachment.
- **Communications:** Media, publicity or other communication costs. Include description and any quotes in the attached budget or as other attachment.
- **Reproduction:** Printing materials or other reproduction costs.
- **Travel:** Estimates for travel. Include description and any quotes in the attached budget or as other attachment.
- **Other:** Include description and any quotes in the attached budget or as other attachment.
- **Indirect Costs (IDC) or Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs:** Apply at your institution's non-research rate (or, if your institution has no negotiated rate, a 10% Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) can be applied if you wish to claim it). Indirect Costs need to be factored into your overall budget. The total budget cannot exceed the limit defined by the RML/Office you are applying to, including Indirect Costs.
- **Other Funding if Applicable:** Other funds that will be used to support the project should be specified. This includes matching funds, other grants, etc.
- **Funding Restrictions:** Food, promotional items and furniture are not allowable expenses. Promotional items include but are not limited to: clothing and commemorative items such as pens, mugs/cups, folders/folios, lanyards, and conference bags that are sometimes provided to visitors, employees, grantees, or conference attendees. [Refer to the NIH Grants Policy Statement for detailed information.](#)

NOTE: Consult with your institution to determine documentation required. You are strongly encouraged to submit your budget to [John Bramble](#) for review prior to submitting your application formally.

Beneficiaries & Goals

- **Populations Served:** Select all that apply, but these should be the primary populations targeted in your project. If not explicitly identified in the proposal section, please do not select it here.
 - Age Group
 - Children (0-12 yrs.)
 - Teens (13-18 yrs.)
 - Adults (19-64 yrs.)
 - Seniors (65+ yrs.)
 - Sexual & Gender Minorities
 - LGBTQIA+
 - Women
 - Geographic Type
 - Medically Underserved Areas/Populations
 - Rural
 - Suburban
 - Urban
 - Issues & Interests
 - Behavioral/Social Determinants of Health
 - HIV/AIDS
 - Maternal Health
 - NIH Helping to End Addiction Long-term (HEAL) Initiative
 - Opioids
 - Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Populations
 - Vaping
 - Race & Ethnicity
 - Alaska Natives
 - American Indians
 - Asians/Asian Americans
 - Blacks/African Americans
 - Hispanics/Latin Americans
 - Native Hawaiians
 - Other Pacific Islanders
- **Participant's Roles:** Select all that apply. These are the primary roles of the participants of your project. These should be explicitly identified in the proposal section.
 - Community Based Organization Staff
 - Data Resource or Tool Developer
 - Data Scientist
 - Educational and Research Institutions
 - Educator, College & Post-grad
 - Educator, K-12
 - Emergency Preparedness and Response
 - Federal Agencies, Departments, etc.
 - General Public
 - Health Care Provider
 - Historian
 - Journalist
 - Library or Informational Professional
 - Public Health Professional
 - Publisher
 - Researcher
 - Student, College & Post-grad
 - Student, K-12

Attachments

Gather all documents that will be attached to your application, including personnel CVs and resumes, letters of institutional commitment or support, and budget template (if applicable).

Acknowledgements

You are required to acknowledge the following statements before applying:

- You will share the information gained with colleagues in your RML, as required by the Request for Proposal.
- You will submit regular, interim & final reports, as requested by the funding agency & stipulated in the Request for Proposal.
- Any web-based resources developed for this project will ensure accessibility to the greatest possible number of people.
- Additional documentations will need to be completed should your project be awarded. Please consult with the RML for details.

Proposal Submission

You will submit your application online.

Additional Information

Grant Writing Resources

For support in grant writing, please see the [NNLM Grants and Proposal Writing Course](#) for tips on award applications. You also can find examples of [Exemplary RFP Application Sections](#), which may inform your planning and writing process.

508 Compliance

Section 508 requires that all website content be accessible to people with disabilities. This applies to Web applications, Web pages and all attached files on the intranet as well as internet. The National Library of Medicine is a part of the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Recipients of National Library of Medicine funding through the NNLM must meet all requirements under Section 508. [Information on 508 Compliance](#).

Reporting Requirements

Reporting Requirement	Access	Timeline
Activities and Participants – Submitted through the NNLM Data Reporting System (DRS)	Subawardees must add reports on their individual project page which is accessible via the institutional record. See tutorial .	Within the first five days of the month following the activity/exhibit completion
Final Report –Submitted through the NNLM DRS	Same as above.	Within 30 days of project completion
Required if Applicable		
If training is provided to librarians: NNLM Training Form Evaluation		
If technology is purchased or provided: NNLM Technology Report	NNLM Technology Report Cleaning and Sanitation Guidelines	Submit before the final report
If funds are included for librarian professional development: NNLM Professional Development Report	NNLM Professional Development Award Report	Within 30 days after the last day completed
If programming is provided to patrons or community members: Project Outcome	PLA Project Outcome	Immediately following program completion- be sure to check the box to ensure NNLM has access to the data.

NIH Public Access Policy

Recipients of NNLM funding are required to deposit any peer-reviewed manuscript upon acceptance for publication in PubMed Central in accordance with the [NIH Public Access Policy](#).

Data Sharing and Development of Training Materials

To facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and information associated with the NNLM Cooperative Agreement Award, all subawardees are required to share any data or training material resulting from funding. This information must be submitted to the following collection sites as applicable:

- [Network of the National Library of Medicine](#) (NNLM) website
- Other websites specifically designated by the NLM as part of the Network of the National Library of Medicine (considering changes in the project and data repositories required to maintain sharing within the Network).

In addition, recipients of funding are expected to use or adapt existing training materials before developing new materials. Consult with your RML/Office and the NNLM Training Office (NTO) prior to developing materials.

Publication and Copyrighting

Per Section 8.2.1. - [Right in Data \(Publication and Copyrighting\) of the NIH Grants Policy Statement](#). The NIH must be given a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license for the Federal government to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use any materials developed as a result of funding and to authorize others to do so for Federal purposes (i.e., the ongoing development of the Network of the National Library of Medicine). Data developed by a subawardees/consortium participants and consultants are also subject to this policy.

NIH Acknowledgement

Any resources developed with project funds must include an acknowledgment of NIH grant support and a disclaimer:

Developed resources reported in this [publications, press releases, internet sites] are supported by the National Library of Medicine (NLM), National Institutes of Health (NIH) under cooperative agreement number **UG4LM013729**. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.

Application Review and Scoring Criteria

RML staff and Network members who represent the Region (i.e., public libraries, health science libraries, or community organizations) may be asked to review and score applications. Selected reviewers use a standardized RFP scorecard. For more information, please review the [RFP scorecard](#).

- You also can find examples of [Exemplary RFP Application Sections](#), which may inform your planning and writing process.
- Scored Review Criteria: Scale: 1-100
- The application will be scored in the following areas:

- **Significance (15 points max):** Does the proposed program make a significant contribution to the mission of NNLM. Is there information on the target population provided? Are there estimates of the potential population and the portion expected to be reached? Is the target group or population described and the actual or perceived need for the proposed program is discussed?
- **Methodology/Approach (40 points max):** Does the statement show the logic and feasibility of the technical approach to reaching the target group or community? Are the types of outreach services provided for the target population appropriate, creative and cost-effective? Does the project plan demonstrate sustainability or the ability to provide lessons learned for future programs? Does the proposed project add value to other initiatives? Does the project use local partners? Does the proposal include a timeline or implementation schedule for major events and activities? Does the program specify what NLM resources or NNLM national initiatives will be promoted and how they will be utilized throughout the project?
- **Evaluation (15 points max):** Is there an evaluation plan? Does the plan make sense given the goals and objectives? Is there a timeline and are individuals assigned responsibility for milestones or tasks? Are there other forms of evaluation that the project should consider or add? Is the plan thorough enough or feasible for the project?
- **Project Staff (15 points max):** Does the proposed personnel have experience in developing and conducting outreach and/or training programs in health information for patients, the public or health professionals. Do the proposed personnel have prior experience working with the target group? Is there evidence of institutional facilities and resources adequate to support the proposed programs. If applicable, do project partners bring experience to the project team?
- **Budget (10 points max):** Is the proposed budget within funding limits? Is the budget justification sound? Could budget items be eliminated or reduced without jeopardizing the project? Does it include money within allowable line items? Do they have line items that account for all the requested money?
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (5 points max):** Does the application identify inequities and disparities or target underserved populations? Is the organization using an inclusive, community-engaged process for planning and implementation if they are proposing community-based programming?
 - NIH-designated U.S. health disparity populations include Blacks/African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, American Indians/Alaska Natives, Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders, socioeconomically disadvantaged populations, underserved rural populations, individuals with a physical or mental disability, sexual and gender minorities, individuals under 18 or over 65, and individuals with less than a high school degree.
- The Review Committee will submit RFP scorecard and comments for funding to the Associate Director of the RML. If further clarification is needed, the applicant will be given one week to submit additional or revised information.
- Reviewers will provide an overall impact assessment of the likelihood for the project to exert a sustained influence on the population targeted. Final recommendations will include at least:
 - Excellent Application. Will have major impact on NNLM goals.
 - Has strong potential.
 - Limited impact, or there are concerns about the proposed plan or quality.
 - The project will not advance the goals of NNLM.
 - Application does not fit in the NNLM mission.
- Applicants will be notified of the funding decision and will receive a copy of reviewer score sheets and comments.
- The RML will provide a subaward agreement for all approved projects. All sub-awards are cost reimbursement. Line-item invoices must be submitted for reimbursement of expenditures. Invoices may be submitted as frequently as monthly.